When one praises an actor in this way, one is always open to accusations of prejudice, hyperbole, uncritical gush, unreasoned eulogy, and the rest. Must a careful and deliberate opinion *always* deny a great man genius ? If so, no careful and deliberate opinions from me !

I have no doubt in the world of Irving's genius—no doubt that he is with David Garrick and Edmund Kean, rather than with other actors of great talents and great achievements—actors who rightly won high opinions from the multitude of their day, but who have not left behind them an impression of that inexplicable thing which we call genius.

Since iny great comrade died I have read many biographies of him, and nearly all of them denied what I assert. "Now, who shall arbitrate?[1]' I find no contradiction of my testimony in the fact that he was not appreciated for a long time, that some found him like olives, an acquired taste, that others mocked and derided him.

My father, who worshipped Macready, put Irving above him because of Irving's *originality.* The old school were not usually so generous. Fanny Kemble thought it necessary to write as follows of one who had had his share of misfortune and failure before he came into his kingdom and made her jealous, I suppose, for the dead kings among her kindred:

*' I have seen some of the accounts and critiques of Mr. Irving's acting, and rather elaborate ones oi his Hamlet, which, however, give ine no very distinct idea of his performance, and a very hazy one indeed of the part itself as seen from the point of view of his critics,

Edward Fitzgerald wrote me word that he looked like my people, and sent nie a photograph to prove it, which I thought much more like Young than niy father or uncle. *I have not seen* a *j>lay oj Shakespeare*s acted I do not know when. I think I should find such an exhibition extremely curious as well as entertaining.*